

Message Text

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SUBJ: TURKISH LEADERS COMMENT ON GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN NEW
YEAR'S MESSAGES

SUMMARY: IN HIS NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE TO THE NATION, PRESIDENT KORUTURK DESCRIBED THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT CRISIS AS THE MOST IMPORTANT DOMESTIC PROBLEM FACING THE COUNTRY. GENERAL SANCAR, IN A STRONGLY WORDED NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE TO THE ARMED FORCES, EXPRESSED THE TURKISH MILITARY'S GROWING CONCERN OVER THE PROLONGED PERIOD OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN THEIR NEW YEAR'S MESSAGES, TURKISH NATIONAL LEADERS GAVE PROMINENT ATTENTION TO THE CONTINUING DOMESTIC POLITICAL CRISIS, AS WELL AS CYPRUS AND OTHER ISSUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST. THERE WAS LITTLE SPECIFIC COMMENT, HOWEVER, ON THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY. PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY WERE THE STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT KORUTURK AND GENERAL SEMIH SANCAR, CHIEF OF THE
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GENERAL STAFF, BOTH OF WHOM DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE DOMESTIC

POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS:

A. KORUTURK. THE PERSISTENT GOVERNMENT CRISIS IS THE BIGGEST DOMESTIC PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION OF OTHER SERIOUS PROBLEMS FACING TURKEY DEPENDS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF POLITICAL STABILITY, THE PRESIDENT DECLARED. "THE PRESENT DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN PARLIAMENT IS NOT SUITABLE TO PUT FORWARD A GOVERNMENT OF SERVICE THAT CAN WORK PRODUCTIVELY ... UNTIL THE END OF THE LEGAL PERIOD OF PARLIAMENT." REFERRING TO EFFORTS AT FORMING A "NATIONALIST FRONT" THE PRESIDENT SAID IT WAS "PLEASING TO SEE PARTIES WITH COMMON POINTS IN THEIR PROGRAMS...BEGINNING TO COOPERATE TO MAKE PARLIAMENT OPERABLE." HE COMMENTED THAT THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM OBLIGED TURKS TO WORK IN COALITION GOVERNMENTS, AND POINTED OUT THAT A COALITION NEEDED NOT MERELY A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY BUT ALSO, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, A "SPIRIT OF AGREEMENT AND COOPERATION." HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THOSE WHO PLAY KEY ROLES AS REGARDS POLITICAL STABILITY HAVE TAKEN "NECESSARY WARNING" FROM PAST YEAR'S EXPERIENCES.

B. SANCAR: GENERAL SANCAR SAID THAT THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES, "WHICH ARE DETERMINED TO REMAIN ABOVE ALL POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL MOVEMENTS, CANNOT REMAIN ALOOF FROM NATIONAL PROBLEMS." REFERRING TO THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN THE LIGHT OF THE MANY PROBLEMS FACING THE COUNTRY, SANCAR SAID: "AS THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES... WE REGRET THAT NO PREVENTIVE OR POSITIVE ACTIONS TO AVOID SUCH CONSEQUENCES HAVE SO FAR BEEN TAKEN AND THAT TIME-WASTING AND IRRESPONSIBLE CONDUCT CONTINUES...THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES ARE PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO SEE THAT SUCH BEHAVIOR IS REPIDLY STOPPED AND POSITIVE STEPS ARE TAKEN ABOUT CURRENT PROBLEMS---WHICH ARE INCREASING TO THE DEGREE THAT THE NATION DESPAIRS -- BEFORE THEY REACH THE POINT OF NO RETURN." ALSO, TOUCHING ON DEFENSE POLICY, SANCAR CALLED FOR HIGHTENED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE NATIONAL SECURITY IN VIEW OF "THE MILITARY CRISIS WHICH IS CONTINUING IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE DEVELOPMENTS IN REGIONAL COUNTRIES,

THE OCCASIONAL CHANGES SEEN IN THE STANCE OF OUR ALLIES AND THEIR IMPACT..."

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C. JUSTICE PARTY CHAIRMAN SULEYMAN DEMIREL SAID THE COUNTRY WAS FACED WITH A VACUUM OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY. HE CALLED FOR A SEARCH FOR CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM NEEDED TO BRING ABOUT STABILITY.

D. REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY LEADER BULENT ECEVIT SOMEWHAT MORE OPTIMISTICALLY DESCRIBED THE CURRENT SITUATION AS A "GOVERNMENT CRISIS" AS DISTINCT FROM A "CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS,"

SUCH AS IN 1971. HE EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT BOTH TURKEY AND THE WORLD WOULD MOVE FROM CRISIS TO GOOD HEALTH IN 1975.

3. COMMENT: THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY WERE IN LINE WITH HIS PREVIOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT. SANCAR'S STATEMENT, HOWEVER, WAS THE FIRST STRONG PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF THE TURKISH MILITARY'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE POLITICAL PARTIES' CONTINUING INABILITY TO RESOLVE THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS. IT APPEARS TO US THAT SANCAR'S STATEMENT SHOULD BE INTERPRETED AS A PRELIMINARY WARNING TO THE PARTIES FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

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